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43% of Parents 'Definitely' Won't Vaccinate Young Kids for COVID, Survey Says

According to a newly released Harvard/Kaiser Family Tree, 43% of U.S. parents of children under 5 years old definitely won't get their COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes the vaccine a greater risk to kids than the virus.

By Megan Redshaw

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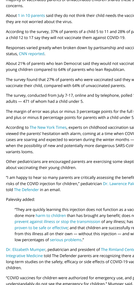
With the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granting Emergency Use Authorization for Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines for kids ages 6 months to 5 years, many parents remain hesitant to vaccinate their children.

According to survey results released Tuesday, 43% of U.S. parents said they definitely under 5 will "definitely not" give their child a COVID-19 vaccine once it becomes the vaccine poses a greater risk to kids than the virus.

The survey, published by the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), found that 27% of parents said they would "wait and see" before getting their child vaccinated, while only their children vaccinated only if required to do so for school or childcare.

Even parents who were vaccinated against COVID-19 said they wanted no give permission for their youngest children to get vaccinated.



When asked why they will not vaccinate their eligible child under 5 right away, parents cited "concerns about the rareness of the vaccine and not enough testing or research, concerns over side effects and worries over the overall safety of the vaccines."

According to the authors of the survey, "concerns over the safety of the vaccines and potential side effects are widespread among parents of unvaccinated children ages 6 months through 4 years old."

More than 8 in 10 parents of unvaccinated young children said they were concerned about serious side effects and about unknown long-term effects. The majority of vaccinated parents of unvaccinated children shared these same concerns.

About 1 in 10 parents said they do not think their child needs the vaccine or say they are not worried about the virus.

According to the survey, 37% of parents of a child 5 to 11 and 29% of parents of a child 12 to 17 say they will not vaccinate them against COVID-19.

Responses varied greatly when broken down by partisanship and vaccination status, CNN reported.

About 27% of parents who lean Democrat said they would not vaccinate their young children compared to 64% of parents who lean Republican.

The survey found that 27% of parents who were vaccinated said they would not vaccinate their child, compared with 69% of unvaccinated parents.

The survey, conducted from July 7-17, online and by telephone, polled 1,847 U.S. adults — 471 of whom had a child under 5.

The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points for the full sample, and plus or minus 6 percentage points for parents of children under 5.

According to The New York Times, experts on childhood vaccination said they viewed the parents' hesitation with alarm, coming at a time when 1 in 5 children were not receiving routine vaccines around during the winter months — and when the surprising of new and potentially more dangerous COVID-19 variants looms.

Other pediatricians and occupational parents are exercising some skepticism about vaccinating their young children.

"I am happy to hear so many parents are critically assessing the benefits and risks of the COVID injection for children," pediatrician Dr. Lawrence Palevsky told The Defender.

Palevsky added:

> "They are quickly learning this injection does not function as a vaccine, has done more harm to children than has brought any benefit, does not prevent against illness or stop the transmission of any illness, has not been proven to be safe or effective, and that children are successfully recovering from this illness all on their own — without this injection — and with very few percentages of serious problems."

Dr. Elizabeth Mumper, pediatrician and president of the Rimland Center for Integrative Medicine told The Defender parents are recognizing there are no long-term studies on the safety, efficacy or side effects of COVID-19 vaccines in children.

"COVID vaccines for children were authorized for emergency use, and parents understandably do not see the emergency for children," Mumper said. "Parents are aware that the vast majority of children have had COVID and developed natural immunity and are wondering why we are pushing vaccines on the immunity of COVID-recovered."

Mumper said parents are justifiably worried about side effects when children get vaccines they don't need.

She said:

> "Parents may have realized that the studies of COVID vaccines in children were based on a few cases of COVID in the vaccinated and placebo groups. The data showed a wide confidence interval (narrow confidence intervals mean greater probability that the data is accurate)."

Based on the clinical trials, the data do "not narrow down" whether the COVID-19 vaccines are the cause of increases in term risk of getting the disease, Mumper added.

"Even Dr. Paul Offit — an offit-supporting vaccine expert and a developer of the rotavirus vaccine — raised questions and concerns over the safety data that he noted is only because he did not have the opportunity to vote 'hell no!'" Mumper told The Defender.

CDC used misleading data to claim COVID is top 5 cause of death in kids

As The Defender reported today, an official with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) during vaccines advisory panel meetings in June presented data exaggerating the risk of COVID-19 in young children.

The data was based on a pinpoint study — not yet peer-reviewed — that conflated COVID-19 deaths in kids using the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) instead of CDC statistics.

NCHS data routinely COVID-19 deaths by including any death certificate that mentions COVID-19, not just those cases where COVID-19 was the primary reason for death. CDC data includes only those deaths where COVID-19 was the underlying cause.

By the end of June, there were 1,433 pediatric COVID-19 deaths through April 30.

However, using the CDC's own mortality statistics, there were only 1,088 pediatric deaths — nearly 25% less than the NCHS and anyone study stated.

In addition to reporting a higher number of COVID-19 deaths than what there were actually caused by the virus, the authors of the study — and the CDC — claimed COVID-19 was a top 5 cause of death among kids ages 0 to 19 years, which included 19 and 19-year-olds.

Yet, the authors of the study compared COVID-19 during the worst part of the pandemic to causes of death during the pre-pandemic period and included older adolescents who are at a higher risk of contracting and dying from COVID-19 than children under the age of 5.

After the misleading data was brought to the attention of the authors, they revised the study and reduced the number of COVID-19 deaths among children and adolescents, from 1,433 deaths to 1,088 deaths — making COVID-19 the eighth leading cause of death in the 0 to 19 age group.

But the revision came after FDA and CDC panel members had already made their recommendations to authorize COVID-19 shots for kids ages 6 months to 5 years.

The CDC has not issued a statement of correction or an explanation as to why the official used misleading data in the presentation, and the study was not retracted.

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Megan Redshaw is a staff attorney for Children's Health Defense and a reporter for The Defender.

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